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S E R M O N

AGAINST

Self-Murder.

Preach'd at

St. Giles's Church *in the Fields,*

On Sunday in the Afternoon,

September 19, 1708.

I Kings, Chap. XIX. Ver. iv.

— And he requested for himself that he might
Die, and said, it is enough, now, O Lord, take
away my Life: for I am not better than my
Fathers.

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Lord Brook.

L O N D O N : Printed by T. Read in White-
friars near Fleetstreet. 1708.

1 Kings, Chap. XIX. Verse iv.

— *And he requested for himself that he might Die, and said, it is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life: for I am not better than my Fathers.*

FOR the better understanding of which Words, I shall give you the History of them in short. The Prophet * *Elijah* having rescued Religion from Idolatry, and at the Brook *Kishon* slain all the Prophets of *Baal*, first letting the People experimentally see *that the Lord He was God and not Baal*: When the People saw it they fell on their Faces, and said, *The Lord He is God, the Lord He is God*. *Baal* being thus confounded, and his Prophets, who were Four Hundred and Fifty Men, all Slain: *Abab* told *Jezabell* all that *Elijah* had done, and withal, how he had Slain all the Prophets with the Sword. Whereupon *Jezabell's* Rage was kindled against *Elijah*, and she sent a Messenger unto him, saying, *So let the Gods do unto me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the Life of one of them, by to morrow about this time*. Thus *Jezabell* having threatned him, and with an Imprecation vow'd his Death; the Prophet flies and went for his Life, and being weary with Travelling, sat down under a *Juniper Tree*, and requested from himself that He might Die, and said, *It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers*. This was the occasion of *Elijah's* Prayer. In speaking to which I will

(1.) Shew the Unlawfulness of it, as being against Nature, Religion and Good Manners, for a Man to put an End to his Days, or so much as to beg of God to take away his Life, be his Condition never so Grievous or miserable.

And because some Men are ready to justifie so Great so Dangerous, and so Unnatural a Sin as *Self-Murder*, and God knows too many have put it in Practice; I will

(1.) Shew 'tis against Nature. The Brute Beasts give us ample Testimony of this, who strive against the Hand of their slayer, and wou'd not Die were they able to resist him. Nature by a secret instinct has taught every Creature to provide for its own Safety. The little Brood when they see a Bird of Prey hovering over their Head, seek to preserve themselves by taking shelter under the Dams Wings. A Fly that has but the Life of a Fly to lose, yet how many ways will she flutter with her Wings to save that Life? Load an Ass never so much, and Work him from Morning to Night he regards it not; but if you endeavour to throw him into a Ditch, or thrust him into the Fire, he will avoid it as much as he can, because he wou'd live and not die.

The Natural Man also wou'd not die if he might choose. *Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath will he give for his Life*, was a true saying, tho' it came from the Devil's Mouth. What Ransom so great that wou'd not be laid down to purchase it? What Torment so exquisite that wou'd not be endur'd, or what Portion so bitter that wou'd not be drunk down to preserve it? Cut off my Feet, said *Mecænas*, and after that my Legs, and my Thighs also, if you please, provided I do but live, it is enough.

The oldest Man has an itching desire to live a Year longer, and when that is expir'd, he is as desirous to survive another, and so on. *Life is sweet, it is a pleasant thing to behold the Sun: but there is bitterness in Death*, as *Agag* King of the *Amalekites* told *Samuel*. 1 Sam. 13. 32. That Being Christ had as Man he so highly valu'd, that if it had not been his Fathers Will, he wou'd not have parted with his Life so contentedly as he did. *If it be possible let the Cup pass from me*, was his earnest Prayer three several times upon his bended Knees. And in the Days of his Flesh he offer'd up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears unto him that was able to give him from Death. Death is call'd by *Job*, the King of Terrors, and by *Aristotle*, *πολλὴν φοβηράτων*, of all Terribles the most Terrible.

Nature has this apprehension of it as the Chief of all Evils, and the Privation of all Good, and therefore the Remembrance of it is bitter to the Natural Man, who endeavours as such to resist it. We read both in Sacred and Prophane Story of some who ran into the Embraces of Death, and became their own Murderers. *Judas* having betray'd his Lord and Master for 30 Pieces of Silver, in the Guilt of it turns his own Executioner. When *Achitophel* saw that his Counsel was not follow'd, and that the

Counsel of *Hushai* was prefer'd before his, he
 2 Sam. 17. Hang'd himself. *Aristotle* is said to have Drown'd himself in the Sea, because he cou'd not find out the cause of its often Ebbing and Flowing. And *Glombrotius* reading *Plato's* Book of Immortality, conceiv'd such a hope of the Souls future Being, that he threw himself into the Sea to come to the Enjoyment of it. *Cato* and *Lucretia* both kill'd themselves. But it is an hard matter to say they had no Reluctancy at all, or no Concern upon them at the same time for their Lives. *Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit Eternal Life?* was a Question put to *Christ* by the Young Man in the Gospel. And 'tis Natural to all Men to ask the Physician, What shall I do to settle my Body in the Soundest Temper, to preserve my Health, and continue my Life?

And as it is against Nature, so

Secondly, Against Religion, for a Man to pray to God to take away his Life. The Lord gave Life to Man and He will take it away again, but the doing of this must be left to his Will and Pleasure. We must not limit God to our time. The Body must return to the Dust out of which it was taken, and the Spirit must return to God who gave it, but We must tarry the Lords leisure. Whilst We are in this World We are Tenants at Gods, Will. We have no certain Term of Years allotted us, neither have we any lease of our Lives, and therefore We must go off when God the Great Landlord of Heaven and Earth pleaseth, and not before. *If Christ will have us stay till He comes, what is that to us.* No Man has Power over his own Life, and therefore how gainful soever Death may seem to any, yet He

is to submit to Gods Providence, and wait his time, let his Condition of Life be never so tedious and miserable. It is God alone that hath right to dispose of the Life of Man, and it is He alone that hath Power to take it away ; and therefore 'tis an usurping of his proper Right and Authority, for a Man to rid himself of that which he has no Power to dispose of. Nay, tho' a Friend who was never so much Wounded, or lay under other Calamities of Life, shou'd desire a by-stander to put Him out of pain by Killing Him, yet he ought not to do it. *Saul* importun'd his Armour-bearer to have kill'd Him, but such a desire will not justify any Christian to put an End to a Mans Days, be they never so Calamitous or full of Misery.

St. Paul desir'd to be dissolv'd, but He did not Petition God to take away his Life. It was only an holy Wish in that Apostle that he might be with Christ, but he made it not his Prayer. It was only a desire in Him, and He corrected that desire in the very next Words, with a better wish to live to Preach the Gospel. *For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you, and having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith.* Phil. 1. 23, 24. Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his, Numb. 23. 15. was *Balaam's* Passionate Wish. Not that he begg'd of God then to die. His intent was, that when it pleas'd God to take his Soul from Him, He might then die as Righteous Men do, and be Partakers of their happiness to pray to die upon every Cross or particular ill that befalls us, is what we ought not to do, and what our Religion looks upon as unwarrantable.

Were our Years never so many, and those irksome and tedious by reason of the many miseries Old Age exposeth to? Are we Rack'd and Tortur'd with the Stone? Are we Tormented with the Gout? Are our Bodies subject to Hundred Distempers, so that there is no Sound Part in yet we ought never to say, *It is enough.* These Words came not the Mouth of a Prophet. It was unwarrantable in *Elijah* to request for himself that he might die,

or that he had Liv'd long enough. That's a saying only fit for God, and not Man; who knows what's better for us then we do our selves. No Calamity whatever shou'd make a Man cry out, *My Soul is weary of my Life.*

Whilst we are in this World, We are like so many hired Servants, set on Work by our Great Master Above, who hath set out our labour to us, and appointed us a Reward if we continue working to the End of the Day; but if we run away before the Day be ended, We shall not only lose our Wages, but we are justly obnoxious to be pursu'd, and cast into Prison for our Disobedience.

I must confess many good Men under their Crosses, or because of present Discontentment with their Condition, have spoke unadvisedly with their Lips. As meek and good a Man as *Moses* was, yet when the Children of *Israel* upon whom God had put the Charge, being surfeited

Numb.
11. v. 4.

with *Manna*, came and wept unto Him saying, *Give us flesh that we may Eat*, he did then Muriney against God, and with a great deal of impatience, cry'd to Him to Kill Him. *Where shall I have*

v. 13.

Flesh to give unto all this People, I am not able to bear all this People alone, for it is too heavy for me, therefore if thou deal thus with me, I pray thee if I have found favour in thy sight, Kill me that I behold not my Misery. The Prophet *Jonah* being angry for a Gourd, in a sudden fit will needs dye, wish

in him self to die; nay, pray'd heartily that God would take away his Life from him. Now, O Lord, take I beseech

Jon. 4. 3. Thee my life from me. And *Job* lying under extream Afflictions crys out, *Why dy'd not I from the Womb? Why did not I give up the Ghost when I came out*

Job 3. 11. the Belly. Ob that I might have my Request, and that God wou'd grant me the thing that I long for; *C. 6. 8, 9* that it wou'd please God to destroy me, that He wou'd let loose his Hand and cut me off. And *Elijah* in

Text, being threatned by *Jezebel* for slaying *Baal's* Prophets with the Sword, fled for his Life into the Wilderness; in his Distress requests for himself that He might die, said, *It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers.*

But God forbid ! that any of us shou'd be subject to the like passion ? What ! shall any Man because he is wearied with his present Lot and Condition, or because things go not well with Him, presently grow weary of the World, and with peevish and froward *Jonah*, wish to die. *I have learn'd, in whatsoever State I am, therewith to be content,* said St. Paul, *I know how to be abased and how to abound, to be full and be hungry,* said the same Apostle. *Phil. 4. 11, 12.*

Had * *Miltiades* been punish'd for his Tyranny, what had become of that Glory which he afterwards brain'd in the *Marathonian* Fields; where with Ten Thousand *Grecians*, He discomfited an Army of the *Persians* of Six Hundred Thousand, to the Peace and Safety of his Country, and the Eternal Renown of Himself.

Had *Themistocles*, for the Luxury and Debauchery of his Youth, been cut off by the *Athenians*, what had become of all *Greece* afterwards? He did great things for his Country, and tho' a Vicious Youth, became an Excellent Man. Tho' the Sun Rise in a Cloud, He may Set in his full Glory, and a Calm Afternoon succeed a Tempestuous Morning. Trust then in God, and wait his time, and prescribe not Times and Seasons to Him. He can command a Calm, and this He hath done after many Violent Storms of Sighs and Tears.

It is a sign We are not acquainted with that Excellent Virtue Contentation, which consists in a chearful and ready compliance with the Will of God; if We grow impatient, and wish our selves Dead, because our Lives are not Cloathed with all the Circumstances we desire. *My leanness, my leanness, Wo is me,* was as an out-cry in the Prophets Days, and it is the general Whining Complaint of the World, but 'tis no way commendable, and what our Holy Religion allows not of.

Indeed when a Man is at the point of Death, then it is lawful for him to cry out, *O Lord take my Soul, receive my Spirit;* or if he cannot move his Lips, inwardly to Meditate upon these Words in his Mind.

We have *First*, the Blessed *Jesus* for our Example in this particular, who being about to give up the Ghost, said, *Father into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* *Secondly,*

Secondly, *St. Stephen*, who at the Place of Execution, when his furious Adversaries were Stoning him to Death, commended his Soul into his Redeemers Hands.

Thirdly, *Antiquity*, It being Customary in the Early Days of Christianity, for Holy Men to commend their Souls into the Hands of God at the point of Death. And this truly Primitive and Pious usage is to this Day kept up by our Excellent Church; who when Death is approaching, has provided her Sons with a Prayer to be us'd by the Minister, or in his absence by any other, to commend the departing Soul into the Hands of God. This way of Praying is warrantable; but for a Man in his Grief, in Trouble, or in any other Calamity, to pray to God then to take away his Life, is what no Man ought to do, and such a Prayer was very strange and unbecoming in a Man of God, as the Prophet *Elijah* in Holy Writ is often call'd. All that can be said for him, and that which will easily bring him off, is this, *That he was a Man subject to*
St. James like passions as we are. And as it is against Nature
 5. 17. and Religion; So

Thirdly, * 'Tis an unmannerly thing in any Man to make his Request to God to take away his Life before he thinks fit. What is this but to make ourselves wiser than God? To dispute his Government of the World, to question the Dispensations of the great Creator, and to reproach our Maker, saying, *Why hast thou made me thus?* For a Man to kick and spurn against Heaven, because he was not so Nobly Born as others, nor so Beautiful, nor of so quick Parts, and why he is not so and so, as others are, is a Murmuring against an Infinite Wisdom, a Quarrelling against Gods wise Dispensations, and a Fretting with what Heaven has allotted him. Whatever our Afflictions be, they are dispos'd, directed and manag'd by the Conduct of a most Wise Providence. They are not sent at Random, or all at a venture; they come not out of the Dust, nor spring out of the Ground, but are from Above, of Gods creating and framing, and are exercis'd towards Mankind for Excellent Ends. Take heed of Murmuring with the *Israelites*. Curse not the Day of thy Birth as *Job* did, and

* *Eine ego ut adverser? Ter. And.*

Quarrel

Quarrel not with the Stars as many Profane Men do. *Dost thou well to be angry?* Said God to *Jon. 4. 9.* *Jonah*, when he smote his Gourd; And he said, *I do well to be angry even unto Death.* A weak and unadvised Answer, and that which did not become the Mouth of so holy a Prophet. I am not here persuading any Man to be stupid, or *Stoical* under a Calamitous State of Life, senseless under Crosses and Sufferings. No, with these we ought to be duely affected, and sensible of God's Hand when it is upon us. Troubled, we may be, but Discontented we must not be, and so wish for Death rather than Life. Groan we may, but Grumble or Murmur we must not. All that I aim at, is to Arm you with Patience and Submission, to dissuade you from kicking against the pricks, to beware of murmuring against God, and, as it were, entering a Protest against your Sufferings. For if we Murmur and Repine against Heaven, and be peevishly discontented at that Condition God thinks fit to place us in, we take the readiest way to provoke him to make it worse. What got the *Israelites* by Murmuring in the Wilderness, but a longer stay in it? The more we strike again against Heaven, the more Blows we shall get. The Almighty is not so to be attack'd. No Language in the Day of Adversity like that of *David*, *I was dumb, because thou didst it.* Thus having confi- *Psal. 39. 9.* der'd *Elijah's* Prayer, and shewn the Unlawfulness of it, as being against Nature, Religion, and Good Manners, come,

Secondly, To offer to your Consideration, that though it was blameable for his Prayer, yet he was highly commendable for his Humility, in saying, *I am not better than my Fathers.*

Who *Elijah's* Fore-Fathers were, or how long he had lived when he requested for himself that he might Die, is uncertain, the Holy Scripture being silent about both of them. He said that he had lived long enough, but how long that was, is not mentioned in the Bible. 'Tis very probable, it was not upon the Account of his Age, but his being stricken in Years, that moved him to cry out

out he had liv'd long enough; but as I hinted in the beginning of this Discourse, the reason was this, *Jezebell* had vow'd his Death for slaying *Baal's* Prophets; and being thus threatned he fled for his Life, and being weary with Travelling, and hungry also, in that faint Condition he Petitions God just then to take away his Life; and he gave this Reason for it, because he was *not better than his Fathers*. Seeing they were gone the way of all Flesh, what was he (as he thought) but he might follow and lie down in the Dust, as his Fore-fathers had done before him. Be who they will, sure I am, he was not Inferiour

to them. He was one of the two who confer'd with Christ in his Glory. He divided

Matth. 17. 4. *Jordan.* He took his Mantle and wrapt it together, and smote the Waters, and they were divid-

2 Kings 2. 8. ed hither and thither. He went up by a Whirl-

Ver. 11. wind into Heaven. Nay he was so Righteous

St. James 5. a Man that upon his Earnest Prayer, it might

not rain, it rain'd not on the Earth by the space of

three Years and six Months: And he prayed again, and the Heaven

gave rain, and the Earth gave forth her Fruit. Thus

though the Prophet *Elijah* in Scripture is styl'd a Man of

God, and dignify'd with that Eminent Name, and though he had several Degrees of Honour above other Mortals

confer'd upon him, yet there was nothing that look'd like Pride in him. If he sprang from Mean and Poor

Ancestors, as most of the Prophets did, he was not ashamed of his descent from them, *I am not better than my*

Fathers. I come,

Thirdly, To draw some Inferences from what has been

deliver'd. And

(1.) Was *Elijah* to blame in making his Request to God

in the Day of Trouble to take away his Life, and his Prayer

unwarrantable? Let us then take warning by him least in

the Day of our Distress we speak unadvisedly and wish to

die as He did. If it be with us as God hath appointed, we

ought to submit to that Wisdom that made us so; but to

murmur, repine, and wish in our selves to Die, because

we are not what we would be, is, to dispute his man-

agement.

gery of the World; to presume to dispose of it better than he hath done, to renounce our Subjection, and set up for Dominion.

The Man in the Fable who was wearied with his Burden of Sticks threw it down, and called for Death, but when Death came, he told him he had no other occasion for him but to be help'd up again with his Bundle. And no question many Persons have in their extrream Misery prayed to Die, and in a sudden fit requested God to take away their Life; yet should Death have then come, 'tis very probable, they would have bid it depart for that time, and been willing to live longer. Our Prayer, whether in Sickness or in Health, in the Day of Prosperity or Adversity, ought to be, *Not my Will, O Father, but thine be done.*

It was a Noble saying of *Cleantes*, an Heathen, *Let the Great Governour of the World lead me into what Condition he pleaseth, I am most ready to follow him.* And I find *Epictetus*, another Heathen, speaking and living up to the same Principle, *In all those Conditions which seem hard and grievous unto me: I do thus dispose my self. I consider they come from God, and I do endeavour not merely to submit, but to assent to Him in his dealings, not only out of Necessity, but out of Choice. Let a Man in Affliction think that nothing comes to pass but what ought to be; and let him not take upon him to reprehend Providence. 'Tis best for a Man to bear what he cannot mend, and to follow God (by whom all Events are dispos'd) without Murmuring.* One of * *Pythagoras's* Scholars desiring that the Gods would * *Jamblic.*
grant him whatsoever he should ask, taught *vit. Pythag.*
him to say rather, *Let me be willing to have whatever they please.*

These were Noble pitches of Heathen Minds, and truly Brave and Generous Souls, thus to resign up themselves to God. 'Tis an undoubted truth that many Christians may go to School and learn of *Heathens* how to behave and demean themselves under Crosses, and a state of Calamity. 'Tis a dismal Consideration that *Philosophy* should beget more of Resignation to the Will of God

God than *Christianity*, and that *Heathenism* shou'd be more prevalent upon the minds of *Heatbens* than *Christianity* upon *Christians*.

But tho' I be not of his Opinion who said, *Sencte Socrates ora pro nobis*, yet I am apt to think there is a great deal more reason to believe Wise *Socrates*, Divine *Plato*, Just *Aristides*, and other Heathen worthies to be Saints, than many of the *Popes* making. With Patience we ought to possess our Souls, and seeing God Created us, and sent us into the World to serve Him, it wou'd argue Ingratitude in us not to serve Him as long as we can. Life is the Gift of God, and till he is pleas'd to take it away, we must not cry out, *it is enough*. It is the pleasure of Almighty God to take to himself the Souls of some in their Youth, and to let others stay behind till they be of a good Old Age. Some expire with their first Breath, and fade away more suddenly than the Grass, and others have their Lives lengthen'd and see many Days. God takes away the Soul of a King, when he thinks fit, as well as that of a Beggar, and who may say unto Him what dost thou? Shall the Clay say unto the Potter, why hast thou made me thus? Why God takes away one Soul and leaves another, he knows best, and therefore it is an unwarrantable Thing in any Man to say, *I have liv'd long enough, O Lord, take away my Soul*. Long Life is a Blessing, and old Age a Crown of Glory. Man's Age, according to *Moses's* computation, is Threescore Years and Ten, and those who chance to hold out longer, and survive themselves, ought to be content with their Condition; because God, for some Reasons best known to himself, sees it fit to continue them longer in the Land of the Living. If our Life should be stretch'd out to the full Measure of *Mathusalem's*, we ought not to ask God the reason why he lets us live so long. He may perhaps have something for us to do, even to that Age. Perhaps at the End of Seventy Years we have not done all that Service he has appointed for us, and therefore it is his Pleasure we should live longer to finish our Work, for *here is no Work, nor Devise, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom, in the Grave*. When we are once transplanted thither, we can improve

improve no more. Our Life is the Day wherein we are to Work, and till the Sun of this Day set and go down, we ought to labour and not be weary.

Secondly, Was *Elijah* to blame for making his Request to God to take away his Life? What are they then, who turn their own Executioners, and lay Violent Hands upon themselves? Believe me, 'tis a Sin of very deep Die; it is an Injury done to God himself, for having created Man after his own Image and Likeness, they, as it were, lay Violent Hands upon Him, who by Knife, Pistol, Halter, or Poyson, remove his Image out of the way. 'Tis an usurping of God's proper Right and Authority, and Murder in the highest degree. Alas! many of the *Heathens* knew no better. Their Thoughts reach'd no farther than the Grave. Death which clos'd their Eyes, was to them the End of all Things. The World then lay in Darkness, and the Times of that Ignorance God wink'd at. But now Life and Immortality is brought to light by the Gospel. The Name of a Saviour is now known and made manifest. The Father is Glorify'd, the Son Ador'd, and the Holy Ghost Declar'd. The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to us. We have a certain Assurance our Souls shall survive our Bodies, and that there is a Judgment to come; which Things the *Heathens* were so bewilder'd about, that they did not know what to say concerning them.

If any Man will presume to dispose of his Life, and put an End to his Days, because some *Heathens* did so; If this be his Divinity He might as well been Born a *Pagan*. Christianity has no effect upon Him. He tramples under his feet the precious Blood of the beloved Son of God, despiseth all his pungent Sufferings, and puts a slight upon his bitter, shameful, and ignominious Death. Nay, He runs into the embraces of *Eternal* Death, for there is no other Name under Heaven given to Man by which he can be sav'd, but the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Men may flatter themselves from the Examples of *Cato*, *Cicero*, and other *Heathens*, who ran into the embraces of Death, and became their own Executioners, but the Gospel
ot

of Christ speaks other Things, and by that we shall be judg'd, and have our final Doom and Sentence. *Morality* without *Christianity* will not bring any of you to Heaven, and if you neglect the *latter*, in hopes the *former* will save your Souls, you are of all Men most mistaken.

Thirdly, My Third Inference is this. Has *Elijah* left us an Example of Humility, in thinking himself no better than his Fathers, what a Lesson of modesty and lowliness of Mind sho'd this teach us? Let his Example check all risings of Pride in us, and pull down that *Pharisaical* boasting of thanking God We are not as other Men are. We live in an Age where every Man and Woman are almost ready to say to one another, *stand apart, come not near me, for I am better than Thou*. This *Leaven* of the Pharisee, has fowrd the Souls of many People. O *Elijah*! Where is thy humility to be found? It went up to Heaven with thee, for there is no such Virtue scarce to be seen or heard of now in the World. Pride is the predominant Vice that Reign among us, and it is so radicated by Time and Custom, that I am afraid, it lies too deep in the Hearts of many to be easily swept away. Where is that Man or Woman, that *He* or *She*, who do not now think themselves better than their Neighbour? Precedency is what the World aspires after, but *Elijah's* Lesson if duely consider'd, would humble and take down the Plumes of their vain Spirits, *they are not better then their Fathers*.

The Consideration they must die and lie down in Dust, as there Fathers have done before them, is enough to make them sensible of their Frailty, and put on a low frame and temper of Soul. Vain Man! *Dust and Ashes*, *art thou Proud*? Look to the place from whence thou cam'st, and forward whither thou art a going, and thou wilt see between thy coming out of the Dust, and thy turning thither again, is but the space of a few Years. The blood which runs in the Veins of the Highest Monarch is but one degree remov'd from Dust, and Death will one Day make them kiss the Ground with their Lips who now scorn to tread upon it with the Soles of their Feet. The proudest Man has a Body of Clay, and

full of Sin, and a Life subject to Mortality. He came into the World with Groans, and was Born with Tears in his Eyes. His Life here is made up of few Days, and those full of Trouble. It is appointed for him to die, and he must pay that Tribute to Nature with Shrinks and Pangs. Death will close his Eyes, stretch out his Body, and expose him as an Horreur to the Eyes of those that shall survive him. To the Grave he must go, in the Dust he must be laid, and the Worms shall feed sweetly upon him. He shall become a Companion of Rottenness, and must say to the Pit, *Thou art my Father, and to the Corruption, and the Worms, ye are my Mother and my Sisters.* Would Men but frame a true Conceit of their own Misery, of their Frailty and Mortality, and that would check all risings of Pride in them, and make them

know themselves. *Be clothed with Humility,* 1 Pet. 5. 5.

says St. Peter. Be not high minded, but fear, Rom. 11. 20.

says St. Paul. When you think you stand, take 1 Cor. 10. 12.

heed lest you fall, says the same Apostle.

To conclude. *All the Days of our appointed* Job 14. 14.

time let us wait till our Change come. Lord let Luke 2. 29.

thy Servant depart in Peace, be our humble Petition at the instant of Death; but let no Affliction or Calamity whatever force us to that Cry, till we see our Change just approaching. God knows what's better for us than we do our selves, and will put an End to our Days when he pleaseth; and therefore let this be our constant Prayer in the Day of Adversity, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Lord, I held my Tongue and said nothing, because, it was thy doing,* said David. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,* said good old Eli, when God denounced an heavy Judgment against him. *The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away,*

blessed be the Name of the Lord. Job 1. 21. *What? Shall we receive*

Good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive Evil? Ch. 2. 10.

Shall we Sin against him, and shall we complain of his

Punishment for it? Wherefore doth a living

Man complain, a Man for the Punishment of Lam. 3. 39, 40.

his Sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Shall we refuse to drink of that Cup which our Heavenly Father hath temper'd for us? Lord thou grindest me to Powder, said Calvin, when the Pangs of Death were upon him, but it sufficeth me because it is thy Hand. It is the Lord, take heed of repining at his Righteous Judgments. Let not Dust and Ashes presume to murmur against the Lord its Maker. Lord let me pass through Fire and Water, so it be I enjoy Heaven hereafter. Let me weep on Earth, so that I may Sing in Heaven. Neither count I my Life dear so that I may finish my Course with Joy. Let me Sow in Tears, so I Reap in Joy.

And God Grant that under all our Troubles, we may submit to his Wisdom, adore his Justice, and rest contented in his Fatherly Disposal of us. And thus let us beg for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

F I N I S.

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